

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 EUR-12 NEA-11 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00

HA-05 ACDA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8437

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUBUMBASHI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

USINT HAVANA

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS LUSAKA 1757

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR, MOPS, ZA, CG

SUBJ: ZAMBIAN EDITORIALS ON SHABA INVASION

REF: LUSAKA 1749 (NOTAL)

1. THE ZAMBIAN PRESS MAY 17 CARRIES FRONT-PAGE STORIES ON

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PRESIDENT KAUNDA'S REMARKS IN LONDON ON THE SHABA INVASION.

ACCORDING TO THE REPORTS, KAUNDA DESCRIBED THE FIGHTING AS

"A VERY SAD DEVELOPMENT" AND LAMENTED THE FACT THAT ZAMBIA

WAS POWERLESS TO HELP ZAIRE'S PRESIDENT MOBUTU. KAUNDA

REPORTEDLY PLEDGED THAT ZAMBIA WOULD PLAY NO PART IN ANY

ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW MOBUTU, BUT HE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THAT

IT WAS PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR ZAMBIA TO SEAL ITS BORDER

WITH ZAIRE. THE ZAMBIAN PAPERS ALSO GAVE FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS STATEMENT DENYING ALLEGATIONS THAT ZAMBIA WAS HARBORING THE REBEL FORCE (REFTEL).

2. DRAWING ON KAUNDA'S REMARKS AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT, ZAMBIA'S TWO DALIES ALSO CONTAINED STRONG EDITORIALS ON THE FIGHTING IN SHABA AND CHARGES THAT INVADERS USED ZAMBIA TERRITORY. BOTH THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED ZAMBIA DAILU MAIL AND THE PARTY-OWNED TIMES OF ZAMBIA DENIED THAT ZAMBIA KNOWINGLY ALLOWED ITS TERRITORY TO BE USED BY THE INVASION FORCE, POINTING OUT THAT THE LONG BORDER WITH ZAIRE WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO GUARD OR SEAL OFF. THE PAPERS DESCRIBED THE FACT THAT AFRICANS ARE KILLING AFRICANS IN AN UNJUSTIFIABLE WAR.

3. THE TIMES EDITORIAL CHARGED THAT "FALSE REPORTS" IMPLYING THAT ZAMBIA CONDONED THE SHABA INVASION "ARE PART OF A PLOT TO SOW DISSENSION AMONG AFRICAN NATIONS." LABELING THESE REPORTS AS "MISCHEVIOUS, LUDICROUS AND PROVOCATIVE," THE PAPER POINTS OUT THAT THE LAST THING ZAMBIA NEEDS IN TROUBLE ON ITS NORTHERN BORDER TO ADD TO ITS DIFFICULTIES IN THE SOUTH. THE TIMES STATES THAT RELATIONS WITH ZAIRE ARE GOOD AND THAT ZAMBIA "WILL NOT BE, AND (IS) NOT, A HAVEN FOR DISSIDENT EX-KATANGESE GENDARMES." THE EDITORIAL CLOSES BY COMMENTING, "THE TRAGEDY IS THAT TOO MANY FOREIGN POWERS ARE SEEKING TO PURSUE THEIR IDEOLOGIES ON THE CORPSES OF UNCLASSIFIED

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AFRICANS."

4. THE DAILY MAIL CHARACTERIZES THE CONFLICT IN SHABA AS ONE IN WHICH EVERYONE LOSES. STATING THAT RELATION BETWEEN ZAMBIA AND ZAIRE HAVE BEEN AT THEIR BEST OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS, THE PAPER SPECULATES THAT THE REBELES MUST HAVE CHOSEN ZAMBIA TERRITORY FROM WHICH TO LAUNCH THEIR ATTACK BECAUSE THEY KNEW THAT ZAMBIAN FORCES ARE CONCENTRATED ON THE BORDER WITH RHODESIA. THE PAPER EXPRESSES THE HOPE THAT THE PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT OF ZAIRE WILL UNDERSTAND THAT "ZAMBIA IS AS MUCH GRIEVED BY THE PRESENT INVASION OF ZAIRE BY THE REBEL FORCES AS THE REST OF THE AFRICA CONTINENT." THE MAIL STATES THAT ZAIRE NEEDS PEACE AND NOT A WAR "WHICH WILL NEVER BE JUSTIFIED." CLINGERMAN

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